AMENDMENT

Amendments to the Specification

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 6, lines 9-15 with the following amended paragraph:

A1

The input face 104 of the ring 102 has means for acoustically coupling the through-opening 110 of the ring to an output face 114 of a speaker 116, shown in phantom lines in FIG. 2, and the output face 106 of the ring is resiliently conformable to a lateral face of a listener's external ear, or auricle. The speaker [[114]] 116 may comprise a known type of electromagnetic, piezoelectric, or electrostatic type of driving element, or a combination thereof, or even some other form of driving element, for generating sound waves from the output face of the speaker and in the direction of the arrow shown in FIG. 3.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 6, lines 16-30 with the following amended paragraph:

A2

In the first exemplary embodiment of the cushion 100 illustrated in FIGS. 1 and 2, the acoustical coupling means includes a circumferential flange 118 provided at the output face 114 of the speaker 116. The through-opening 110 at the input face 104 of the ring 102 is configured in size and shape to receive the speaker's output face 114 in a resilient, complementary, slide-in engagement in the direction of the arrow in FIG. 3. Additionally, the interior surface 112 of the ring 102 is provided with a complementary, flange-retaining recess 120 located adjacent to the input face 104 of the ring that is configured to resiliently receive the flange [[116]] 118 of the speaker in an elastic, "over-center" engagement. That is, the opening 110 at the input face 104 of the ring 102 is stretched out and over the output face 114 and flange 118 of the speaker 116, then allowed to return elastically such that the flange is retained in the recess 120, and the speaker's output face 114 abuts the portion of the interior surface of the ring 102 circumscribing the through-opening 110. A bead of a resilient adhesive (not illustrated) can be dispensed in the recess 120 between the ring 102 and the speaker flange 118 to secure and render the coupling more permanent.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 10, lines 12-22 with the following amended paragraph:

As shown in FIG. 7, means 362 are provided for retaining the input end 352 of the plug 350 in the third retainer ring 340. As illustrated in FIG. 8, the retaining means 362 may comprise a bead of an adhesive 364 between the input end 352 of the plug 350 and the third ring [[304]] 340. Alternatively, a plurality of cams 366 may be supported on the plug's input end 352 and made resiliently deflectable thereat by, *e.g.*, a plurality of elongated slots 368 formed in the input end of the plug, such that the input end and the cams can snap into the opening 342 of the third ring 340 with an over-center locking engagement, as shown in FIG. 9. In yet another alternative, the retaining means 362 can comprise complementary screw threads 370 on respective ones of the input end of the plug and in the opening 342 of the third ring, in which instance, the plug 350 screws into the opening 342, as illustrated in FIG. 10.

A3